

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 083533
ORIGIN INR-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13
CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 SS-15 /079 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RNA/NE:AAVACCARO:MP
APPROVED BY INR/RNA:PGRIFFIN
SSM:CWKONTOS
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
SSM

-----070940 010223Z /65

P 312221Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION SINAI PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY
USINT BAGHDAD PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SANA PRIORITY
TREASURY DEPARTMENT WASHDC PRIORITY 0000

S E C R E T STATE 083533

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 083533

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 533 - MARCH 31, 1978

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY
OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION

1. EGYPT-ISRAEL. EMBASSY CAIRO REPORTED THAT EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS AND JOURNALISTS WERE INCREDULOUS THAT SADAT HAD AGREED TO WEIZMAN'S COMING TO CAIRO AT THIS TIME, WITH IDF TROOPS IN SOUTH LEBANON AND BEGIN STILL HOLDING TO HIS EARLIER POSITIONS. SADAT OVERRULED TOP ADVISORS SUCH AS GAMASY, ON THE GROUNDS THAT EGYPT SHOULD TAKE AS A FIRM COMMITMENT WEIZMAN'S HAVING TOLD GAMASY IN HIS LETTER THAT IDF WOULD PULL OUT OF THE SOUTH. IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, SADAT AGREED TO WEIZMAN'S TRIP IN ORDER TO AVOID GIVING BEGIN A PUBLIC RELATIONS SUCCESS BY REBUFFING THE OFFER. SADAT ALSO LIKELY WANTED TO HEAR THE ISRAELI ASSESSMENT OF BEGIN'S US VISIT. MEANWHILE, "SOURCES CLOSE TO SADAT" WERE QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE EGYPTIAN LEADER FELT "FURIOUS AND DECEIVED" THAT WEIZMAN HAD BROUGHT NO NEW ISRAELI PEACE PROPOSALS TO CAIRO WITH HIM YESTERDAY.
(SECRET)

2. LEBANON. ARMY COMMANDER KHOURY HAS INDICATED THAT HE IS RELUCTANT TO SEND HIS FORCES TO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THIS RELUCTANCE IS DUE IN PART TO A FEAR THAT A LEBANESE ARMY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WILL INEVITABLY COME INTO CONFLICT WITH THE PALESTINIANS. SUCH A CONFRONTATION QUITE LIKELY WOULD RESULT IN PALESTINIAN CLASHES WITH LEBANESE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 083533

FORCES THROUGHOUT LEBANON. BECAUSE OF THE SMALL SIZE OF THE LEBANESE ARMY, THEY ARE RELUCTANT TO MOVE THEIR FEW DISCIPLINED UNITS TO THE SOUTH WHEN THEY MAY BE NEEDED TO DEFEND THE LEBANESE HEARTLAND AROUND BEIRUT. CONCERN IN THE NORTH, MOREOVER, HAS BEEN INCREASED BY THE LARGE NUMBERS PALESTINIANS WHO WERE DRIVEN OUT OF SOUTH LEBANON BY THE ISRAELIS. (SECRET)

3. ISRAEL. THE EMERGENCE OF YITZHAK NAVON AS THE LIKELY NEW ISRAELI PRESIDENT HAS SERVED TO HEIGHTEN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE HERUT AND LIBERAL FACTIONS OF THE LIKUD OVER THE PRESIDENCY ISSUE. THE SCARS LEFT BY HERUT AND THE LIBERALS BACKING RIVAL CANDIDATES, THEREBY APPARENTLY ASSURING THE ELECTION OF A FAVORITE OF THE OPPOSITION, WILL BE LONG IN HEALING, ACCORDING TO EMBASSY TEL AVIV. LIKUD MEMBERS ARE ALREADY GRUMBLING THAT AFTER WAITING 30 YEARS TO PUT ONE OF THEIRS IN THE PRESIDENCY, BEGIN FAILED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

4. WEST BANK. ACCORDING TO OUR JERUSALEM CONSULATE GENERAL, NABLUS' MAYOR SHAKA RETURNED HOME MARCH 28 CLAIMING TO HAVE COLLECTED ALMOST \$11 MILLION IN AID FROM

ARAB STATES AND PALESTINIAN EXPATRIATES DURING THE LAST FOUR MONTHS. SAUDI ARABIA'S \$4 MILLION AND LIBYA'S \$5.6 MILLION OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS WERE THE LARGEST PLEDGES. SHAKA'S FUND-RAISING HAS HAD THE PLO'S BLESSING, AND NOW THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE ISRAELIS WILL APPROVE THE FUNDS BEING SPENT. THE CONSULATE NOTED THAT SHAKA'S TRIP AND THE CONTACTS HE MET HAVE NO DOUBT ENLARGED HIS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND ADDED TO HIS CONFIDENCE.
(CONFIDENTIAL)

5. USSR-ME. THE USSR'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO THE CRISIS IN LEBANON REFLECTS CONCERN THAT DEVELOPMENTS THERE COULD UNDERCUT RECENT SOVIET ADVANCES IN THE ARAB WORLD. FROM MOSCOW'S PERSPECTIVE, THE GREATER DANGER LIES IN THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 083533

POSSIBILITY THAT EVENTS MAY REKINDLE SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN DIVISIONS AND THEREBY:

(A) UNDERMINE EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE OPPONENTS OF SADAT'S INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT SOVIET DEMANDS FOR A RETURN TO GENEVA;

(B) THREATEN ONCE AGAIN TO PLACE THE USSR IN THE MIDDLE OF A BLOODY FEUD BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE PLO; AND

(C) IMPROVE PROSPECTS THAT A CONFLUENCE OF INTERESTS OVER LEBANON AMONG SYRIA, THE US, AND ISRAEL' COULD LEAD ASSAD TO BECOME MORE RECEPTIVE TO US INFLUENCE.

6. THE USSR'S ABSTENTION ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON LEBANON HIGHLIGHTED ITS SENSITIVITY TO THE PITFALLS OF THE PRESENT CRISIS FOR SOVIET INTERESTS. SINCE THEN, DEVELOPMENTS PROBABLY HAVE INCREASED SOVIET INSECURITY. FOR EXAMPLE:

(A) ASSAD'S EFFORTS TO LIMIT THE PLO'S AUTONOMY WILL HEIGHTEN SOVIET SUSPICIONS THAT HE WILL SQUEEZE THE PLO EVEN HARDER.

(B) ISRAELI PRESS SPECULATION THAT ISRAEL MIGHT AGREE TO ALLOW THE ADF TO OCCUPY THE REGION BETWEEN THE PRESENT "RED LINE" AND THE LITANI RIVER WILL FEED SOVIET PARANOIA ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SYRIAN-ISRAELI COLLUSION AT THE PLO'S EXPENSE.

(C) ASSAD'S PUBLIC HINTS OF A RECONCILIATION
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 083533

WITH EGYPT, COMBINED WITH HIS STATED INTENTION TO PROCEED WITH SYRIAN INTERNAL LIBERALIZATION, ARE LIKELY TO BE INTERPRETED IN MOSCOW AS EVIDENCE THAT HE IS BACKING AWAY FROM LAST WINTER'S OSTENTATIOUS EMBRACE OF THE USSR.

7. DESPITE ITS HIGH STAKE IN THE OUTCOME OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS, MOSCOW'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE EVENTS THERE IS SEVERELY LIMITED. THE KREMLIN IS CONSTRAINED BY THE SAME DILEMMA THAT CONFRONTED IT DURING THE 1975-76 LEBANESE CIVIL WAR. IF ASSAD MOVES AGAINST THE PLO AND MOSCOW GOES ALONG WITH HIM, SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE PLO, LIBYA, IRAQ, AND THE PDRY WILL SUFFER. ARAFAT, ALREADY SUSPICIOUS OF MOSCOW'S INTENTIONS AFTER ITS TEMPORIZING OVER THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION, MIGHT TURN TOWARD SADAT AND THE CONSERVATIVE ARABS AS HIS BEST HOPE FOR SALVATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF MOSCOW BACKS THE PLO AND THE REJECTIONISTS, IT WOULD ALIENATE ASSAD, STRENGTHEN SYRIAN RELATIONS WITH THE US, AND THUS REVIVE THE POSSIBILITY THAT MOSCOW WOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE PEACE PROCESS.

8. WITH LIMITED ROOM FOR MANEUVER, THE KREMLIN'S EFFORTS SO FAR HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AT KEEPING EVENTS FROM FORCING IT TO MAKE AN UNPALATABLE CHOICE AND AT AVOIDING ACTIONS THAT WOULD ANTAGONIZE THE MEMBERS OF "STEADFASTNESS" FRONT. (THIS LATTER CONCERN ACCOUNTS FOR THE SOVIET ABSTENTION AT THE UN.) SOVIET PROPAGANDA IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS HAS ENCOURAGED SADAT'S OPPONENTS NOT TO LET DIFFERENCES OVER LEBANON DISRUPT THEIR COHESION. THUS THE SOVIETS HAVE INSISTED THAT ISRAEL'S INVASION WAS THE DIRECT RESULT OF SADAT'S INITIATIVE AND WAS CONDONED, IF NOT INSTIGATED, BY THE US; THAT IT AIMED AT DESTROYING THE PLO AS AN INDEPENDENT FORCE; AND THAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO FOMENT DIVISIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL'S SCHEME FOR SEPARATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EACH OF ITS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 083533

ARAB ADVERSARIES.

9. SOVIET DIPLOMACY, MEANWHILE, HAS FOCUSSED ON TRYING TO FORESTALL THREATS TO PALESTINIAN AUTONOMY. MOSCOW CONTINUES TO DEMAND THAT INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO SECURE ISRAEL'S WITHDRAWAL SHOULD NOT INFRINGE ON LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY, A POSITION THAT PRESUMABLY CONNOTES

RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE UNIFIL MANDATE AND EXPRESSES SOVIET OPPOSITION TO ADF (I.E., SYRIAN) MOVES THAT WOULD FURTHER UNDERMINE THE PALESTINIAN POSITION IN LEBANON. AT THE SAME TIME, ACCORDING TO ARAB PRESS REPORTS, A SOVIET MESSAGE TO ASSAD ON MARCH 22 URGED THAT HE AVOID BECOMING EMBROILED IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, AN EVEN CLEARER INDICATION THAT MOSCOW HOPES TO DISSUADE ASSAD FROM USING THE UNIFIL MANDATE TO RESTORE LEBANESE CONTROL TO THE SOUTH AS A PRETEXT FOR ELIMINATING THAT LAST AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN STRONGHOLD.

10. MOSCOW'S OWN ACTIONS OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE PROBABLY WEAKENED ITS ABILITY TO CONSTRAIN ASSAD, HOWEVER. THE USSR'S EARLIER ABILITY TO ENCOURAGE SYRIAN COOPERATION THROUGH PROMISES OF ADDITIONAL ARMS AID IN EXCHANGE FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR HAS PROBABLY BEEN WEAKENED BY THE LARGE SOVIET-SYRIAN ARMS AGREEMENTS LAST WINTER. ANY MOVE BY MOSCOW TO HOLD BACK ON THOSE PROMISES WOULD RISK A MORE SERIOUS BACKLASH IN DAMASCUS THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE CASE BEFORE THE ACCORDS. AT THE SAME TIME, ASSAD IS WELL AWARE THAT SYRIA'S POSITION AS MOSCOW'S ONLY REAL ENTREE TO THE PEACE PROCESS CONTINUES TO GIVE HIM CONSIDERABLE LEVERAGE IN DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS. (SECRET) COOPER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE083533
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AAVACCARO:MP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780141-0467
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978031/aaaaaawq.tel
Line Count: 247
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b1f380b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3096555
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTSUM 533 - MARCH 31, 1978 LONDON FOR KINSOLVING PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY
TAGS: PINR, EG, IS, UR, SY, LE, PLO
To: SINAI
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b1f380b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014